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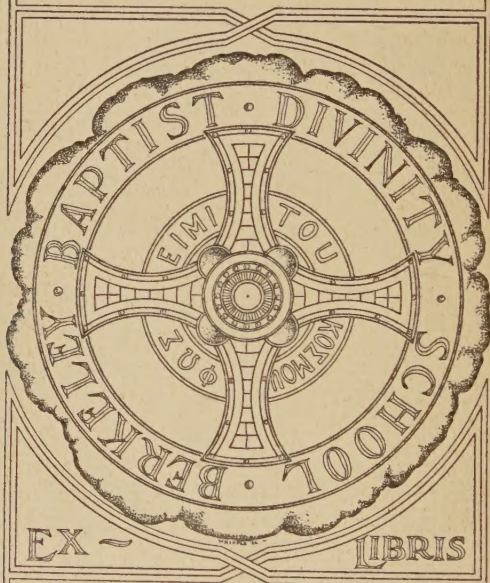
THE
PAPACY

By A. L. MAYCOCK

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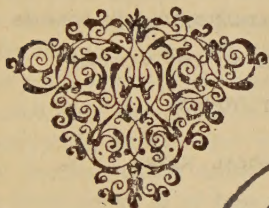
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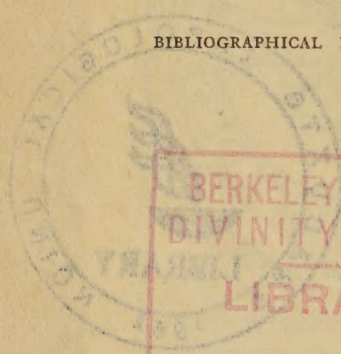
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THE PAPACY

CHAPTER I

THE PAPAL OFFICE

THE present Pope, Pius XI., is the two hundred and sixty-second of his line. Considered simply as an historic succession of sovereigns, the Papacy is the most venerable dynasty that the world has ever known. No *imperium* of the past has exercised so profound and so lasting an influence upon the course of human affairs; none has so consistently defied those laws of growth and subsequent decline, which seem to govern the lives of human institutions, as of human individuals. The story of its past is scarcely less than the history of a civilization.

The word "Pope" derives from a Greek colloquialism, and means simply "father." The earliest instance of its application to the Bishop of Rome is found on an inscription dating from the time of Pope Marcellinus, who died in 304. Before that time no Bishop of Rome is addressed as Pope in any correspondence or other record that has survived to the present day. The title was not officially adopted by a Roman bishop until the latter part of the fourth century, when Siricius (384-398) is found using it in correspondence. In the eleventh century Gregory VII. reserved its assumption and use exclusively to the occupant of the See of Rome.

During the early centuries, the appellation "Pope" was applied to and used by prominent bishops and teachers of the Church as a term expressive of special respect and of affectionate veneration. Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria, refers to his predecessor in that office as "our Pope, the blessed Heraclas." St. Cyprian, St. Athanasius, and St. Augustine were frequently addressed as Pope by people who wrote to them. "So you are the Pope of these sacrilegious sectaries!" said the Roman magistrate at Carthage, when St. Cyprian was brought before him. As late as the seventh century St. Gall applies the title to the Bishop of Cahors. At the present time each and every priest of the Eastern Orthodox Church calls himself Pope, and is so called by his flock. The Greek Patriarch of Alexandria officially entitles himself "Father and Pastor, Pope and Patriarch, Father of Fathers, Pastor of Pastors, Bishop of Bishops, Thirteenth Apostle, Judge of the Universe"—a very resounding *exordium* to the episcopal pronouncements! But, at any rate, the point to be here noted is that the word "Pope" has no special significance in itself, though in the English form it has never been applied to any person other than the Bishop of Rome.

For the purposes of the present study, then, the Pope is defined as that Christian priest who, according to the belief of the Church over which he presides, unites in his person the following offices:

1. Bishop of Rome.
2. Metropolitan of the Roman province.
3. Primate of All Italy.
4. Patriarch of the West.
5. Supreme Pastor of the Catholic Church.

Herein is the real essence of the Papal office and the ground of all controversy concerning it. All Christian bodies not in communion with Rome, whatever may be their differences of belief in other articles of faith, are agreed in repudiating the Papal claim to supreme spiritual jurisdiction. More especially are they agreed in denial of its necessary implication, the belief in Papal infallibility. On the other hand, nobody would dispute the Pope's claim to the first four titles enumerated above. They are all, so to say, topographical, and in most countries there is a bishop or archbishop who holds corresponding offices. Thus New York is a Metropolitan See; Venice, Lisbon, and Jerusalem are patriarchates; Toledo and Armagh are primacies. But Rome is unique, the capital city of Catholicism. When people speak of the Roman Church, they are not usually thinking of the Diocese of Rome. The Roman Church, as everybody understands the term, refers to the whole body, numbering some three hundred million members and disposed under some fifteen hundred bishoprics, over which the Pope presides as supreme pastor.

It is, perhaps, possible in historical writing to make rather a fetish of impartiality. The most impartial histories are too often the dullest. Nevertheless, it remains true that a suave and restrained manner of exposition is one of the first qualities in all good history. In the case of the Papacy, of course, much of the historical background is a matter of controversy, and issues are introduced which are only proximately historical. The first four centuries of Christian history have long been a great battle-ground of controversy. The ground has been, as it were, ploughed up by the rival bombard-

ments of scholars; one picks one's way cautiously between academic shell-holes; artillery-fire of heavy calibre has levelled landmarks to the ground, and only the expert can recognize them; one is sniped from unexpected quarters.

Again, claims are made concerning the nature of the Papal office which, if admitted, make the Papacy quite unique amongst human institutions. You cannot write adequately of the Papacy without mentioning, for instance, Papal infallibility; and you cannot, from the nature of the case, write of Papal infallibility without being controversial. On the purely historical side, of course, it is quite different; but the historical is only one side, and in the present study we wish to touch, however briefly, upon both.

It may be said at once that an exhaustive examination of disputed points is plainly out of the question in the space at our disposal. All that we can do, in discussing debatable questions, is to make it clear that they are debatable, and, when possible, to summarize briefly the line of argument adopted by the respective parties to the dispute. Happily the old "Giant Pope" sentiment is almost a thing of the past; to-day, in its traditional form, it is found only in certain remote rural districts in Northern Europe and in the swamps and backwoods of the United States. That is all to the good. For the most part these controversies, always vigorous and occasionally acrimonious, are to-day conducted upon a more dignified plane of reasoned debate.

That the Pope, as Bishop of the only surviving See of apostolic foundation, would be entitled in a united Christendom to a certain primacy of honour—that

upon him would naturally fall the duty of convening General Councils and of presiding (in the capacity of chairman) at their sessions, that he would occupy a primatial position amongst the Christian bishops—these things are conceded by many who are not in present communion with the See of Rome. Such prerogatives are regarded as proper and natural to the most venerable bishopric in Christendom. But it must be noted that the basis of Catholic belief is wholly different from this, and derives only in a proximate manner from questions of geography or history. The primacy belonging to the Pope is held to belong to him *jure divino*, by divine ordinance. It is held to belong to him in virtue of the special charge laid upon St. Peter by Christ, who was the founder and who is the head of the Church. Upon St. Peter was the Church founded; to St. Peter and to his successors in the Roman bishopric is held to belong this supremacy of spiritual jurisdiction.

The argument is usually developed upon some such lines as the following:

It is premised that the functions of the Church are to preserve intact, to interpret, and to propagate that revelation of supernatural truth which Christ came upon earth to give. The Church, therefore, has a definite teaching mission; and if such teaching is to assert its quality of revelation, it must be given under some guarantee of inerrancy. In so far as any supernatural religion claims to be revealed, it must necessarily profess to be infallible—that is, true. If it be too difficult for ordinary people to grasp, if it is susceptible of many interpretations (mutually contradictory), if it can advance its basic assertions only as

matters of opinion (probably, but not certainly true), then, so far as this quality of revelation is concerned, it might just as well go out of practice altogether. Hence, in order that a religion professing to be divinely revealed should have its true value to later generations, it is essential that the agent of its transmission should be able to interpret and expound the message itself, and should be able to do so with authority. Precisely this claim is made, and has always been made by the Church. You get it in the very earliest times, immediately after the first day of Pentecost. "It hath seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us," said the Fathers at Jerusalem, in an almost matter-of-fact manner. Before the end of the first century, St. Clement, Bishop of Rome, urges obedience to "those things which we have written to you by the Spirit." Instances could be multiplied.

Now the Catholic belief concerning the Papal office is this: The Church, as the appointed guardian and teacher of the Faith, is protected under Providence from error in the interpretation thereof. As learning accumulates and the domain of knowledge expands, the necessity arises of greater precision, fuller explanation, more exact definition. It is not a matter of adding anything to the revelation, but of clarifying, and thereby excluding wrong interpretation. The Church can add nothing, but only explain and define more precisely as occasion arises. This power of definition is vested ultimately in the Papal office. When the Pope, speaking in his capacity as supreme pastor of the Catholic Church, defines a doctrine concerning faith or morals to be held by the whole Church, then "by the divine assistance promised to him in blessed

Peter, possessed of that infallibility with which the Divine Redeemer willed that His Church should be endowed," that definition is held to be infallibly true.

Such is the doctrine of Papal infallibility, defined by the Vatican Council in 1870—itself, of course, a clarification concerning the nature of the Papal jurisdiction. The exercise of infallibility is strictly circumscribed. No pronouncement made by the Pope as a private person is considered within the definition. As a statesman, an author, a legislator, the Pope is as fully liable to error as anyone else. He is endowed with no personal quality of inspiration. He may be wrong as an individual theologian, as were Honorius I. and John XXII. In short, if any of the conditions named above are unfulfilled, then a Papal pronouncement may or may not be true, but it is in no sense binding upon the conscience. The infallible *magisterium* is, so to say, official and not personal. None of the greatest doctors and theologians of the Church have been Popes.

So much in brief summary of a highly controversial question. By those who do not accept them the Papal claims are opposed on the ground that they are both unscriptural and unhistorical. It is urged that the elaborate organization and jurisdiction of the modern Papal sovereignty are nowhere adumbrated either in the Gospels or in the canonical books of the New Testament. This argument is countered by an appeal (*a*) to a more careful and critical examination of the Biblical texts themselves, and (*b*) to what is usually called the idea of development, first expounded by St. Paul. The acorn grows by a natural development into the oak-tree; the child becomes a full-grown man.

Functions multiply; the organism becomes more complex; there is physical and mental expansion. Yet continuity is preserved throughout; developments are natural and legitimate. In like manner (it is pointed out) the more explicit declaration of Papal powers and the more detailed jurisdiction exercised by the Papacy are natural concomitants of the expansion of the Church and the added complexity of its organization. To this the critic replies by suggesting the possibility of false developments, of one-sided or exaggerated growth in certain directions; he points to circumstances of history and geography which tended to give a fortuitous importance to the Roman bishopric—an importance which the Popes were quick to consolidate and to exploit.

The question, accordingly, resolves itself into a further discussion as to how far the Papal sovereignty, as defined by the Vatican Council, is to be recognized as implicit in the actions and position of the Holy See in earlier times, and more particularly in the first five centuries of the Christian era. To these problems historical criticism is clearly unable to provide a final solution. History is not, after all, an exact science; it will demonstrate, but it will rarely establish. Each student will focus a certain set of objects, and will see others with genuine difficulty. According to a man's vision will he witness the pageant of history. Let us give one or two illustrations of the kind of thing that we have in mind.

"It is said," wrote Cardinal Manning, "'Yes, but the primacy of Rome has been denied from the beginning.' Then it has been asserted from the beginning! Tell me that the waves have beaten upon the shore,

and I will tell you that there was a shore for the waves to beat upon."

Again, as early as the year 96—within the lifetime of St. John, and before the Fourth Gospel was written—we get what Bishop Lightfoot called "the first step towards Papal aggression," and what a Catholic would call the natural assertion of the Roman primacy; the case in point is St. Clement's famous letter to the Church at Corinth. St. Cyprian's *De unitate* has proved itself a double-edged sword in the discussion; so have the writings of Vincent of Lerins. These are one or two points in an age-long and highly specialized controversy, whose terms can, however, be stated very simply. The question ultimately at issue is this: Since Christ founded a Church which was to endure for all time as the guardian and teacher of His revelation, where is that Church to be found to-day, and by what signs may it be recognized? But history gives no cut-and-dried answer to these things. Knowledge is the defence, but not the measure of revelation; and, after all, not all of the saints of this world have been students of history.

In the administration and government of the Catholic Church the Pope is assisted by a number of departments or ministries which are collectively described as the Roman Curia, and are directed by members of the Sacred College of Cardinals. In 1586, Sixtus V. fixed the maximum number of cardinals at seventy, of whom six were to be Cardinal-Bishops, fifty Cardinal-Priests, and fourteen Cardinal-Deacons. In practice the Sacred College is rarely at full strength; at the present time it numbers sixty-four members. The six Cardinal-Bishops are resident in Rome, and

occupy the six suffragan Sees of the Roman Diocese. Of the Cardinal-Priests, thirty-three occupy archbishoprics or Metropolitan Sees in various parts of the world; thus Cardinal Hayes is Archbishop of New York, Cardinal Bourne is Archbishop of Westminster. The remaining Cardinal-Priests reside in Rome, and are known as Cardinals of the Curia. But each Cardinal-Priest has nominal or titular charge of one of the parish churches of Rome; and it is from this office that his title derives. Thus Cardinal Dubois is Archbishop of Paris; but his cardinalate derives, not from his archbishopric, but from the fact that he is Cardinal-Priest-in-charge of Santa Maria-in-Aquiro, Rome.

When the Papal office falls vacant, the task of choosing the new Pope lies with the assembled College of Cardinals. No Pope can appoint his own successor.

The last important reform of the Roman Curia was undertaken by Pius X. in 1908. Benedict XV. made one or two further adjustments in 1917. In that year, for instance, the Congregation of the Index was suppressed, and its duties were transferred to the Congregation of the Holy Office. The Roman Curia, as at present constituted, comprises twelve Congregations, three Tribunals, and four Offices of Curia. In addition must be included the various standing commissions and commissions of Cardinals—for historical studies, for the codification of the Canon Law, for the revision of the Vulgate, and so forth—and that body of persons officially known as the Pontifical Family.

The following are the twelve Congregations :

1. The Congregation of the Holy Office.
2. The Congregation of Consistory.

3. The Congregation of the Sacraments.
4. The Congregation of the Council.
5. The Congregation of Religious Orders.
6. The Congregation of Propaganda (*i.e.*, of missionary work).
7. The Congregation of Rites.
8. The Congregation of Ceremonial.
9. The Congregation for Extraordinary Affairs.
10. The Congregation for Seminaries, Universities, and Studies.
11. The Congregation of the Oriental Church.
12. The Congregation for the fabric of St. Peter's.

In most cases the functions and duties of these bodies are sufficiently adumbrated by their titles. The Holy Office, originally known as the Roman Inquisition, received the status of a Congregation in 1558. It is charged with the general safeguarding of the Faith and of the Church's ethical teachings, and performs the duties formerly belonging to the Congregation of the Index. The Congregation of Consistory, founded by Sixtus V. in 1588, is entrusted with the general oversight of dioceses throughout the world (except in missionary countries, which concern the Congregation of Propaganda), with the appointment of bishops, the creation of new dioceses, and many other matters. Processes for canonization or beatification of saints are examined by the Congregation of Rites. The Congregation of the Oriental Church is the newest foundation of any; it was brought into existence by Benedict XV. in 1917, and deals with all matters relating to those Uniate churches who do not use the Latin rite.

There are, as we have noted above, three Tribunals of the Curia. They are :

1. The Apostolic Penitentiary.
2. The Sacred Roman Rota.
3. The Apostolic Signatura.

The first of these tribunals is under the direction of the Cardinal Penitentiary, who is appointed by special Papal brief. It is this officer who, at the opening of a Jubilee year, offers to the Pope the golden hammer, with which the Holy Father knocks three times upon the *porta santa* of St. Peter's. Since 1917 the tribunal possesses jurisdiction in all matters relating to the granting of indulgences. It deals with all questions of conscience submitted to the judgment of the Holy See. It is chiefly, as Benedict XV. declared, a tribunal of mercy; and in view of the essentially intimate and personal character of its work, it very naturally preserves the strictest secrecy concerning all its actions and findings.

The Sacred Roman Rota judges all contentious cases which come before the Holy See and require a full judicial process; it is also the first court of appeal above the episcopal courts. The officers of the Rota, who are known as auditors, are appointed by the Pope and must hold doctorates both of theology and canon law.

The Apostolic Signatura is the supreme ecclesiastical court of appeal. It was completely reorganized by Pius X. in 1908, and at the present time has competence in all appeals or petitions against sentences of the Rota and in all accusations against auditors.

Finally, we come to the four Offices of Curia :

1. The Apostolic Chancery.
2. The Dataria.
3. The Camera.
4. The Secretariat of State.

The Chancery, one of the oldest of the Curial departments—it dates from the twelfth century—and the Dataria are together concerned with the despatch and expedition of all bulls and briefs issued under the direction of the Pope and the Congregations. It is rather interesting to note that, from quite the beginning of the Middle Ages, the notaries of the Papal Chancery developed a highly characteristic script, which makes a medieval Papal document as unmistakable as are, for instance, the documents of the English Exchequer during the Plantagenet period. An Archbishop of Tours in 1075 was quite unable to decipher a Papal brief directed to him, because it was written in “*littera Romana*.” It was largely upon the “*Cancelleresca*” hand, used by the Papal Chancery in the fifteenth century, that the early Italian printers based their first experiments in italic type. The medieval Papacy, like the Chancery of the Emperors, issued its official documents under a seal cast in metal and not in wax; these metal seals, which were called *bullæ*, were considerably smaller than the waxen seals used by most of the royal chanceries. This, by the way, is the derivation of the term “bull,” as applied to a Papal document.

The Apostolic Camera is charged, under the constitution of Pius X., with the administration of the temporal property of the Holy See.

The Secretary of State is the most important minister of the Curia, and, apart from the Secretary for Briefs, is the only Cardinal who has his residence in the Vatican buildings. The office, as at present defined, is of no great antiquity; it was set up by Innocent XII. in 1692. But, in so far as the Secretary

of State lives in constant and intimate communication with the Pope, and acts as his confidential assistant in all matters relating to ecclesiastical administration and all matters determining the relations of the Papacy with the civil governments of the world, he inherits a much longer tradition. The great Hildebrand, before himself acceding to the pontifical throne as Gregory VII., acted in the capacity of Secretary of State to all the six Popes who preceded him. St. Charles Borromeo filled the same office during a scarcely less critical period of ecclesiastical history. Under the present constitution the office is held only during the reign of the Pope by whom the appointment to it was made; each newly elected Pope chooses his Secretary of State. It was, therefore, something of a precedent and a unique tribute to a great scholar and statesman when Pius XI., on his accession, invited Cardinal Gasparri to continue in the office which had been his during the previous pontificate. The Cardinal has been Papal Secretary of State since 1914.

History, we have said, will demonstrate, but will rarely establish. The statement is, perhaps, too absolute. For in one field historical demonstration is of its nature negative and not positive. No article of religious belief (Catholic, Protestant, Mohammedan, or any other) will ever find positive demonstration in history. The most that history will give is the negative demonstration that that article of belief is at least tenable, that it does not conflict with known or ascertainable fact. Thus, one will search history in vain for any positive confirmation of Catholic belief concerning the nature of the Papal office; the most that the apologist can expect to establish is that the

Papal claims, confronted by the facts of history, are not inconsistent with those facts. His gesture is essentially defensive; he becomes an apologist only under provocation. All historical controversy concerning the Papacy has centred on incidents and actions, a certain interpretation of which would render an article of faith untenable. Cases in point are the Isidorian Decretals, the confession of Liberius, and the condemnation of Galileo.

For history, as Lord Acton said, reposes upon documents, not upon opinions; and history is not theology. In any treatment of the Papacy one must be prepared to recognize a distinction, which is perhaps an arbitrary one, between the two aspects under which it presents itself. On the one hand, it is a spiritual *imperium*, claiming to exercise an authority which is not wholly of this world; on the other, it is a sovereign dynasty, whose history is to be investigated like that of any other. In this chapter we have thought it well to summarize one or two points under the former head; for the title of this sketch is "The Papacy," and not simply "The History of the Papacy." In the chapters which follow, our treatment will be exclusively historical.

CHAPTER II

THE FIRST FIVE CENTURIES

AMONGST the scattered and hard-pressed Christian communities of the early centuries, the Roman Church rapidly came to occupy a certain pre-eminence. In the first place, with the great influx of Jews into Rome after the sack of Jerusalem in the year 70, Christianity began to make converts amongst the rich patricians and servants of the imperial Court; and the Roman community quickly became the richest and probably the largest of the Churches. It was the most formidable of all these early Christian bodies; and for this reason it was the most severely persecuted. It was established in the capital city of the Empire beneath the very eye of the authority which had declared Christianity an illegal cult; as early as the time of Domitian it had members who were amongst the highest and wealthiest in the city. Outbursts of violent and organized persecution were sporadic, but for two and a half centuries a policy of steady repression and hostility was adhered to; and, according to the *Liber Pontificalis*, twenty-nine out of the first thirty Popes laid down their lives for the Faith. In that heroic list of names each biographical note ends with the terrible yet triumphant words: "He received the crown of martyrdom." Pontian, condemned and exiled, died amongst the convicts in the pestilential mines in Sardinia; Fabian was beheaded in the Decian persecution; Cornelius, worn out by privation, died in exile.

At the beginning of the second century St. Ignatius of Antioch described the Roman Church as "presiding over the league of love"; a lifetime later St. Irenæus referred to her "particular pre-eminence." We need not here involve ourselves in the endless controversies concerning the bearing of these texts on the spiritual jurisdiction exercised by the Roman bishopric over the other communities. All that need be noted is that, after the destruction of Jerusalem, the Roman Church naturally came to occupy a sort of maternal position among the other Churches. If there was a Mother Church during the second and third centuries, it was at Rome—certainly not anywhere else. The charity of the Roman Church was traditional; of her relative abundance she gave freely to less fortunately situated brethren. Eusebius has preserved portions of a letter from Pope Soter to the Church at Corinth, with which was sent a sum of money for the relief of the poor and of Christians condemned to hard labour in the mines. In the middle of the third century the Roman Church, as we learn from a letter to the Bishop of Antioch, supported more than fifteen hundred widows and destitute persons.

The Christian Church, in fact, rapidly, deliberately, and finally shifted its centre of gravity. This is a very remarkable phenomenon. After the first half-century Jerusalem never occupied in Christian administration the place that was later to be occupied by Mecca in the Mohammedan world. Yet Jerusalem was as certainly the birthplace of the one religion as Mecca was of the other. The transference took place under the converging force of a variety of circumstances. The Jewish and Christian communities of Jerusalem

were scattered far and wide by the edicts of Vespasian; the Christians were conscious of the necessity of differentiating themselves from the Jews, with whose religion the Christian Faith was invariably identified by the Roman Government for many years; Rome was the hub of the Empire, and its Christian community had been founded by the two most illustrious apostles, St. Peter and St. Paul. Yet, after all, St. Peter had founded Antioch; St. Paul had founded Corinth and Ephesus, both great cities; the line of the bishops of Jerusalem, starting from St. James, was not interrupted by the destruction of that city. It is impossible wholly to account for the phenomenon on these lines.

On the other hand, it is true that almost all the heresies of the first two or three centuries were Judaistic in tendency, seeking to re-anchor the Church to its Jewish foundation and its Old Testament theology, seeking to minimize the Christian revelation, and to restore Jewish ritual and practice—the Jewish Sabbath, circumcision, and the like. The Montanist heresy, for instance, was in a large degree an attempt to recentralize the Church on Jerusalem. The ascetic Ebionites used to turn towards Jerusalem when they prayed, as the Mohammedan faces Mecca. Against these Judaizing movements, whose success would have meant so serious a narrowing of the Gospel message, the Church had constantly to be on the alert.

It is not to be urged, of course, that during these three centuries up to the Peace of the Church the Roman bishopric exercised any such detailed and regular jurisdiction over other Churches, as was later exercised by a Hildebrand or an Innocent. The whole

thing was relatively nebulous and undefined. Probably you would not find during this period (*i.e.*, up to 313) more than twenty or twenty-five instances wherein a Bishop of Rome addressed the whole Christian body throughout the Empire on some point of faith or observance, or pronounced on a disputed question. Usually his decision is accepted, but by no means always. Unanimity as to the proper time for celebrating Easter was not reached until the Council of Nicæa, although Pius I. (or more probably, Anicetus) and Victor had pronounced in the matter, and anticipated the judgment of the Council. But, vaguely or clearly—and apologists on either side will always differ as to the degree of vagueness or clearness—temporally or spiritually, it remains manifest that some kind of special prestige attached to the Roman bishopric. When they asked the pagan Emperor Aurelian to decide which of two claimants was the real Bishop of Antioch, the sovereign simply asked which of them was in communion with Rome.

Those three centuries during which Christianity, emerging from the utter obscurity of a distant colony, advanced to become the faith of the whole Empire from the Tweed to the Tigris, were centuries of intense concern with the things of the spirit. There were innumerable religious movements of every description, and they all found adherents in Rome. In the majestic background was the official creed, the acknowledgment of "Divus Cæsar," on whose altars all men must sacrifice—a creed in which everyone, except Jew and Christian—acquiesced as part of their civic duties, a creed which was covertly ridiculed by philosophers; whose ceremonial was under State

management, and in which few professed any serious belief. For the rest, it was almost a matter of *tot homines, quot sententiæ*. There were austere Stoics and pleasure-seeking Epicureans. The mystical Egyptian cults of Serapis and Isis had become enormously popular. The horrible and obscene rites of which Augustine speaks in his *City of God* were widely practised; there were abstruse philosophical systems, scrapings of the Greek genius, seeking to solve the riddle of the universe; perhaps most widespread of all there was Mithraism, particularly popular in the imperial armies, who had made contact with it in the Persian campaigns. It was a form of sun-worship, and we know that at the end of the third century there were about sixty Mithraic chapels in Rome. As late as 390 the revolting ceremony of the Taurobolia or Blood-bath was celebrated upon the Vatican hill; Mithraism died hard in Rome.

All these religions were perfectly legal and fully recognized by the State, which only stipulated that you should duly sacrifice at the proper intervals upon the altars to the god-emperors. Christianity remained proscribed; for manifestly no Christian could, without flagrant denial of the Faith, offer worship to the unreal gods set up by others. It would be an exaggeration to say that the Roman Church did not emerge from the catacombs until the time of Constantine; but it is certain that right up to the end of the third century the Bishop of Rome did not live within the city; the centre of ecclesiastical administration was outside the walls, on the Appian Way. There is no need to deduce from this that the Christian community of the third century was still a despised or poverty-

stricken minority. We are not far from the days of Damasus when the Roman bishop was to appear in the most splendid trappings of pomp and honour. Christianity had many converts in the highest places of imperial administration, and in the most intimate positions on the personal staff of the Emperor. As early as the year 190 Marcia, a wealthy lady of the Court, secured from the Emperor Commodus an order of release for all Christians working in the Sardinian mines; and Pope Victor supplied the official list of the persons affected by the generous decree. But the Church was still an illegal society in the eyes of the State; and the manner of its treatment depended very largely upon the personal attitude of the Emperor. Some, either through indifference or genuine kindness, were content to turn a blind eye to the Church's existence and expansion, to enforce no penal statutes unless there was definite provocation; others, animated by blind hatred or genuine apprehension for the security of the State, threw the whole force of the administrative and penal machinery against the Christian communities.

The wave of Orientalism, of which Mithraism and the other Eastern cults were but symbols, was adroitly turned to account to revive the rather moribund prestige of the Emperor's person. Aurelian initiated and Diocletian, the arch-enemy of the Church, attempted to complete the transformation of the Roman Empire into an Oriental despotism. Diocletian proclaimed his own apotheosis and governed the Empire not from Rome, but from Nicomedia in Asia Minor. By the end of the third century the Roman Senate had sunk into the position of a mere town

council. During a terrible two years the final attempt was made to crush the Christian Church out of existence. But the dawn was at hand. In 312 Constantine routed Maxentius at the Milvian Bridge and entered Rome in triumph. In the following year the Edict of Milan gave peace to the Church; on October 2nd Pope Melchiades held a council in the Lateran buildings, which had been presented to the Church by the new Emperor. The most stupendous revolution in history was accomplished. The brief experiment of the god-Emperor had failed. The Empire had become Christian, and the Papacy was upon the Lateran Hill.

The new era may be said to open with the Council of Nicæa. It was summoned in 325 by the Emperor Constantine, primarily in order to settle a dispute between the Bishop of Alexandria and one of his deacons, Arius by name. Over three hundred bishops assembled, almost all of whom were Easterners. There were only four bishops from Western Sees; the Pope was not present, but was represented by two canons. This is not the place to enter into an examination of the intricacies of the Arian heresy, which was later to come far nearer to destroying the Church than had Nero, Decius, or Diocletian. The controversy turned on the precise relationship of the human and divine natures in the Person of Christ. Arius found a solution in denying His perfect divinity, and saying that He had been created by the eternal Father; He was not, therefore, perfect God, but only a sort of emanation. The Fathers of Nicæa, making use of a term employed by Pope Dionysius in an earlier controversy, condemned this Arian doctrine, asserting that our Lord was, as to His divinity, "consubstantial" with

the Father. The difference between the two positions was, of course, fundamental. An Arian Christ, if one may use the term without irreverence, would have been simply a variation on Apollonius of Tyana or any of a dozen other contemporary revivalists and wonder-workers. The Council's decision against Arius was almost unanimous.

Constantine was himself baptized on his deathbed by an Arian bishop. His immediate successors came forward openly as champions of Arianism. This was, perhaps, natural; for Arianism was essentially an Eastern cult, an attempt to make Christianity into an Oriental mystery religion like any other, and it had spread with great rapidity in the years following Nicæa. Moreover, the idea that it belonged to the Emperor to prescribe the faith of his subjects was still a commonplace of political administration. The swaying fortunes of the long struggle between Arianism and orthodoxy were, then, largely conditioned by the personal preferences of the respective emperors; and in the Eastern Churches the faith was saved by one man, Athanasius. The success of the Emperor Constantius in imposing Arianism upon the Empire may be gauged by the fact that at midsummer in the year 355, there was not a single bishop in possession of his See who had not subscribed to the exile of Athanasius and the virtual repudiation of the decisions of Nicæa. A small handful of bishops had remained firm under the most violent persecution to which an Arian Empire had subjected them. One was the veteran Hosius; another was Pope Liberius, who was promptly exiled; a third was the great Athanasius, five times exiled from his See by the State, hunted like

a wild beast from end to end of his diocese, seeking refuge when things became too warm even for him amongst the hermits of the Eastern desert, yet returning constantly to renew the conflict for the faith and triumphing finally in the peaceful occupation of his See. In 379 Theodosius I., a Spaniard, became sole Emperor; Arianism was a spent force.

Pope Liberius seems to have purchased release from the privations of exile by signing some document which satisfied the Emperor Constantius. The exact contents of this document are not known; indeed, its very existence has been questioned. All that we do know is that it did not involve a repudiation of Nicæa, but that it did involve a throwing-over of Athanasius. The latter says that Liberius signed under threat of death. It seems certain that nobody in Rome knew anything about the affair during Liberius' lifetime, nor did the Pope himself ever make any reference to it. But his later years in the Papal office showed him as staunch as before his exile.

By this time the Bishop of Rome had become one of the most important figures in the Roman world. His bishopric was probably the richest in Christendom; and when Pope Damasus asked the prefect of the city whether he would become a Christian, the latter smilingly replied: "Willingly, if you will make me Bishop of Rome!" Those historians who write as though the Papacy suddenly stepped into the shoes of the civil government in the year 476, suddenly became rich and respected, suddenly started to govern the Church, are almost as badly off the track as those who suggest that, in 411, the Roman Empire perished completely and became a German State. Papal elec-

tions in the fourth century were often stormy affairs, for great temporalities were at stake as well as a high spiritual office. The pagan chronicler, Ammianus Marcellinus, speaks of the wealth and splendour of the Papal office—the Pope “can give banquets whose luxury surpasses that of the Emperor’s table.” In the natural course of events, Innocent I. (402-417), with other prominent men of Rome, was amongst those who attended the Imperial Conference at Ravenna to negotiate a settlement between Alaric and the Government. As ambassadors of the Emperor, St. Leo I. (440-461), with two Roman senators, proceeded to the camp of Attila, the Hun, with proposals of peace; and the barbarian chieftain did not continue his march on Rome.

In the sphere of ecclesiastical administration the prestige of the Papal See was steadily increasing. A council held at Sardica (the modern Sophia in Bulgaria) in 343 recognized the appellate jurisdiction of the Pope: “It will be very right and fitting for the priests of the Lord from every province to refer to their head—that is, the See of St. Peter.” This was a very considerable step forward; appeals to Rome are very rare indeed during the first three centuries. On doctrinal matters the position is clearer and precedent more abundant. In 380 Pope Damasus condemned as heretical an opinion put forward in Constantinople concerning the nature of the Blessed Trinity. “When he did this,” writes the historian Sozomen, a contemporary, “all were quiet, as the controversy was ended by the judgment of the Roman Church; and the question seemed at last to be settled.” St. Augustine recognized Cecilian as Bishop of Carthage, since he

was "united by letters of communion to the Roman Church, in which the supreme authority of the apostolic throne has always been held." In a letter to Leo I., the bishops of the province of Arles declared that "through blessed Peter, the prince of the Apostles, the most holy Roman Church should hold sovereignty over all the churches of the world."

We are here on highly controversial ground. Volumes of apologetic and counter-apologetic have been written on the position of the Papacy in the Christian world of the fourth and fifth centuries; and each side seems able to support its own position by a wealth of argument. In some cases the Popes seem to have been dilatory and hesitating where a firm assertion of authority might have appeared desirable; in others they acted with a rash precipitation which provoked irritation and resistance; in others again their wisdom and moderation in asserting their jurisdiction were conspicuous. Did the Pope's position repose primarily upon the special eminence of the See of Peter or the special prestige of the imperial capital? These and many other questions cannot here be examined. But the central fact remains, and we think that we are on common ground in enunciating it: At the end of the fifth century the primacy of the Roman See is generally recognized and attested by a huge mass of evidence. Ultimately the Pope is the primate of the Church. You will find many instances of resistance to the Papal claims; apologists will constantly differ as to the scope and nature of the Pope's jurisdiction at that time. But the basic fact remains. Constantinople had become the capital of the Empire, but Rome remained the capital of the Church. The

famous third canon of the Council of Constantinople (381) claimed only that Constantinople should take rank as the second See in Christendom—stepping, as it were, over the heads of the far more venerable Sees of Antioch, Jerusalem, and Alexandria. That was a bold enough claim; to have gone further would have been unthinkable and preposterous to the Christian conscience of the time.

With the possible exception of St. Leo I. Rome produced no great Pope during the first five centuries. She had no bishops to compare with an Athanasius of Alexandria, an Ambrose of Milan, a John Chrysostom of Constantinople. None of the great doctors of the early Church were Bishops of Rome. Certainly the pre-eminence acquired by the Roman See during the first five centuries was not built up by the personal genius or commanding abilities of its successive occupants. Many of these early Popes were highly capable Churchmen, men of the soundest practical judgment and the most genuine zeal for the faith; not a few were saints; several were of noble descent. But none was outstanding in the sense that Augustine or Origen was outstanding. Yet the Roman See had already a great history and an honourable one. She had protected Athanasius and John Chrysostom against powerful enemies. She had refused to toy with the apocalyptic and pseudo-mystical heresies of Montanus. In the great controversies concerning heretical baptism she had taken the side of moderation and good sense. She had condemned the too rigorous and puritanical precepts of Novation and Tertullian. Her tradition as guardian and teacher of the faith was more splendid than that of any great Eastern bishopric.

CHAPTER III

THE RELATIVELY DARK AGES

WE have noted that by the middle of the fourth century the temporal prestige of the Papacy was very considerable. When Gregory the Great acceded in 590, the Pope had become the richest man in Italy, owning lands in all parts of the Empire, and particularly in Sicily. He was still, of course, a subject of the Roman Emperor; his election required confirmation from the Imperial Court at Constantinople. But Justinian had abolished the Roman Consulate in 541, and his later reforms of administration in Italy had made the bishops almost like overseers of the State officials. By the end of the century the Pope had become the first Roman citizen, wielding in the service of the Western Empire a far more effective sceptre than did the enfeebled Exarchs of Ravenna.

There had been no break in continuity. The various rebels and usurpers of the fifth century—Alaric, Genseric, and the rest—had come, not to destroy, but to possess. The old Roman life went on, the old traditions remained, and Virgil's poems were still recited in the Forum of Trajan. Neither in political nor in ecclesiastical history does the year 500 possess any special significance.

In 568 came a far more serious menace—the first invasion of the Lombards. Within a few years they had mastered the whole of the great alluvial plain which still bears their name. Ninety out of one hundred and eight Italian bishoprics were swept away in the flood. The Imperial Exarch sought refuge

amongst the lagoons of Ravenna, the invader was undisputed master of the north of Italy. "What we endure from the Lombards," wrote Pope Pelagius II. in 584, "no tongue can tell." Such was the position in the West when Gregory the Great, perhaps the best and greatest man who ever occupied the Papal throne, was elected in 590.

The reign of Gregory is often represented as the opening of a new era—the portal, so to say, of the Middle Ages. We cannot regard this view as satisfactory. Gregory the Great, it seems to us, was the last of the great Romans; like Ambrose, he had held the highest civic offices before becoming a bishop; he is in the great tradition of imperial statesmen and administrators. As commander-in-chief of the armies he was largely instrumental in saving Rome from capture by the Lombards in 595. The treaty between the Empire and the Lombards, which was signed in 598, was negotiated chiefly through his agency. These were, perhaps, strange activities for a Christian bishop; but Gregory was, by force of circumstances, more than that. His was the only authority of any effect in Italy; and when he was angrily reprimanded by the Emperor Maurice for usurping the functions of the Exarchate, he could reply with justice that he had acted in the first interests of the Empire and had done what the Exarchate had made no attempt to do. In Rome he presided over the supplies and distribution of food. He was statesman and patriot, the saviour of his people.

That is one side of his great career. The other is even more important. On the death of his father, Gregory had made over his private fortune to monastic

foundations—Monte Cassino had been sacked by the Lombards in 580—and throughout his pontificate he did his utmost to encourage the spread and development of monasticism. The monks of St. Benedict were his spiritual militia. He sent Augustine to Britain; vigorous missionary work was undertaken amongst the Lombards. Monastic houses were encouraged to undertake agricultural work, which had been terribly neglected in past years. In 593 the Pope published his famous *Dialogues* in four books, the second of which is a life of St. Benedict—the earliest that we possess. He did much to systematize the liturgical offices of the Church. The Canon of the Mass was already old and venerable; Gregory added a few words to this greatest (save one) of Christian prayers, and prescribed that the Lord's Prayer should be said immediately after it. When, towards the end of his reign, the Bishop of Constantinople assumed to himself the title of Œcumenical Patriarch, Gregory promptly forbade its official use, adding that such a title properly belonged to no bishop. He desires "no honour which shall detract from the honour which belongs to my brethren"; nevertheless, "who doubts that the Church of Constantinople is subject to the Apostolic See? Indeed the most pious Lord Emperor and our brother the Bishop of that city do eagerly acknowledge this." Not always, however; there was a marked falling-off in eagerness as the seventh century progressed, as Constantinople became more important and Rome less so in the economy of the Empire.

The Roman Empire centred upon the Mediterranean. It is of the highest importance to a proper comprehension of history to realize that for the first

seven centuries the Mediterranean was the domestic pond of Christendom. Since the days of Caractacus there had been pressure from the Barbarians on the northern and eastern frontiers of the Empire. But the marvellous assimilative power of the imperial administration and the toughness of its tradition were sufficient to prevent any complete break-down or anything approaching revolution. The Lombards were, perhaps, the most terrible enemies whom Italy ever had; yet they soon forsook Arianism for Catholicism and began to intermarry with the native inhabitants. By the eighth century their kings are writing their decrees in Latin; by the ninth century the Lombard language was not to be heard anywhere in Italy. Assimilation was complete. As long as the Mediterranean ports remained open, no power could destroy the Empire, nor was there any reason to fear the dismemberment of Christendom.

Suddenly from the far deserts of Arabia came an enemy who was to accomplish what no barbarian chieftains had ever come within a hundred miles of performing. It is almost impossible to exaggerate the importance of the tremendous onslaught of Islam. Within the space of a few years the Mohammedans, sweeping all before them from Jedda to the Bosphorus, from Suez to Algeciras and San Sebastian, destroyed the ancient world. Syria had fallen by 636, Egypt ten years later. By 711 the Moslem was in Spain. With the loss of Egypt, papyrus ceased to reach Gaul. By the time of Charlemagne, Marseilles, for centuries the greatest port in the West, was almost a deserted city. In the course of the ninth century, Sardinia, Corsica, and Sicily fell beneath the sway of the Crescent. Only

upon the extreme flanks had the invader been held. In 717 the imperial armies hurled him back from Constantinople; in 732, Charles Martel engaged him almost before the walls of Paris and flung him back upon the Pyrenees.

Europe was saved, though held in a state of siege. But the Mediterranean was now a Mohammedan sea; the link, so firmly forged, which had held Christendom and the Empire together, was snapped. By the middle of the eighth century the last pretence of administering Italy from Constantinople had been given up. In 754 the Donation of Pepin, King of the Franks, marked the foundation of the temporal power of the Papacy and the virtual abandonment of the Pope's temporal allegiance to Constantinople. What Islam had not captured she had rent in twain. The schism of the Empire was an accomplished fact; the schism of the Church was plainly foreshadowed.

Fortunately for the Church and for Europe, the Papal office was occupied during these terrible years by a succession of magnificent Pontiffs. Rome was the centre which sustained the tremendous missionary zeal which converted the greater part of Northern Europe. During the eighth century the resources of the Papal library were strained to the uttermost by the constant demands for service-books and articles of Church equipment. We know that Benedict Biscop, Abbot of Wearmouth, made seven journeys to Rome, returning on each occasion loaded with books, sacred pictures, and altar cloths. Pope Paul I. sent Greek treatises on grammar and the sciences to the Frankish King. Greek was regularly taught in the Roman seminaries, and the traditions of the old culture were preserved.

In the account of an ecclesiastical case tried at Rome in 813 mention is made, amongst other officials present, of one "George, the Librarian." All this must not, however, blind us to the fact that it was an age of violence and anarchy. When the anti-Pope Constantine was deposed and Stephen III. elected, the former had his eyes put out and was dragged through the streets of Rome in derision. At the synod which followed he was set upon by the Roman clergy, savagely beaten, and thrown out of the Lateran Basilica.

It was almost a miracle that the great Iconoclast controversy did not end in permanent schism between East and West. But unity in the Church was secured where it had been lost in the Empire. If schism had come, it would have been partly traceable, like so many disasters of the time, to Islam. There is a significant similarity between the Mohammedan ban on images and religious symbolism on the one hand, and the Iconoclast position taken up by Leo the Isaurian on the other.

The political and economic situation in Europe was supremely critical. Europe found herself suddenly a closed and isolated State. During the whole Merovingian period Gaul had been a maritime country, facing the Mediterranean; Rome had been central to the whole scheme of things. But now all was altered; the Emperor had confiscated the Papal dominions in Sicily during the Iconoclast affair; the Mediterranean was closed to communication. The Lombards, by now loyal sons of the Church, had made common cause with the Pope against the Iconoclast emperors, and in 751 the Lombard King had seized Ravenna, the last

imperial stronghold in the peninsula. But the Pope, a temporal prince discharging great secular duties, could not regard this Lombard aggression with equanimity. Small wonder that he should have looked farther north for a power to whom he might appeal for temporal aid, and from whom he could expect spiritual homage. Small wonder that the coronation of Pepin by St. Boniface should have been followed (in 754) by the famous Donation. Herein the King recognized the Pope as lawful heir to the derelict imperial possessions and pledged himself to vindicate the Papal rights in the matter. Thus were founded the States of the Church. In 759, Pepin recaptured Narbonne from the Moslems.

Without Islam, it has been well said, the Frankish Empire would never have existed. Charlemagne without Mahomet would be inconceivable. There is no special significance in his repeated campaigns against the Saxons, Bavarians, and Avars, though his conquests had important results. The Cross followed in the wake of the sword, and Charles's famous capitulary of 785 prescribed the death penalty for treason, arson, human sacrifice, and refusal to accept Christian baptism. Pope Adrian I., whilst congratulating the Emperor on his military successes and rejoicing with him at the number of conversions, attempted to mitigate this last terrible prescription; and Alcuin spoke his mind even more frankly in the matter. By the end of Charles's reign the frontiers of European Christendom had been pushed out to the line of the Elbe. In a sense his Empire was indeed a Holy Roman Empire, though its holiness, to say the least of it, was of a decidedly muscular character. But in these Eastern

campaigns Charlemagne is in the tradition of the Emperors of old, of Julian and Theodosius. What gives its special character to the Caroline Empire is the presence of Islam in Spain and the Mediterranean; for whereas the old Empire had been primarily maritime, that of Charles was purely territorial. The coronation of Charlemagne by Pope Leo III. was destined to prove a most momentous event in history. Yet we must realize that the Caroline Empire was essentially a makeshift, almost a personal creation. Charlemagne saved Europe on her frontiers and did much to cement the spiritual unity of the West; but his temporal Empire was not to endure.

In the Lateran Basilica, Leo III. caused to be erected a huge mosaic, representing in allegory the relations between Pope and Emperor. Charles and Leo kneel before St. Peter, and the Apostle bestows upon each the symbols of their respective offices—the gonfalon and the pallium. Thus was adumbrated that great principle which, variously modified and developed, was to dominate European political theory for nearly seven centuries. All earthly sovereignty, spiritual and temporal alike, derives from God, being, in a sense, delegated by Him. In Christian society the spiritual and temporal powers are entrusted to two authorities, each absolute in its own province, yet each dependent upon the other—Church and Empire. The Church, then, is held to be independent of secular control, but “as in the ceremony of anointing the King the dignity of the consecrator is greater than that of the consecrated, so the dignity of the priest is greater than the dignity of the prince.” Both spiritual and temporal powers are, in a sense, within the Church; there can be no

ultimate dualism. With the coming of the Middle Ages we shall get further developments, rival theories of ecclesiastical and secular publicists. But the central idea remains: baptism is the hall-mark of Christian citizenship.

“Mankind is one ‘mystical body’ . . . it is an all-embracing corporation which constitutes that Universal Realm, spiritual and temporal, which may be called the Universal Church, or, with equal propriety, the Commonwealth of the human race. . . . If Mankind be only one and if there can be but one state that comprises all mankind, that state can be none other than the Church which God Himself has founded.”

With the rapid disintegration of the Caroline Empire after Charles's death (in 814) the Church seems to come forward as the greatest and, indeed, the only unifying force in Europe. The spiritual foundations had been more securely laid than the temporal. Two events, both of which occurred in 831, are, perhaps, symbolical, though of no particular importance in themselves. In that year Gregory IV. confirmed the appointment of the first Archbishop of Hamburg; the new archdiocese is to extend over Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Greenland, and Iceland. A month or two later the Mohammedans resumed a naval offensive, attacked Sardinia, and captured Palermo. Fifteen years later they effected a landing at Ostia, came right up the Tiber, and plundered the churches in Rome. It might well have seemed a mere matter of time before Islam would have established complete supremacy in the Mediterranean and occupied the whole northern coast from Barcelona to the Balkans. But a new maritime power had already

appeared. In 845 the Normans had sailed up the Guadalquivir and sacked Seville. Ten years later they were in the Balearics. The Caroline sovereigns, fighting on interior lines, had saved the mainland; the Normans were to reopen the seas.

In a remarkable manner Rome seems almost always to have produced her greatest Popes in times of acute crisis. Not many of the Popes have been in the first rank of great men; but Nicholas I. (858-867) is very certainly one of them. All over Europe men were looking to the Papacy as the only symbol of corporate unity. The spiritual jurisdiction was everywhere recognized; the temporal power was regarded as natural and necessary. In France especially the Church was struggling against the brutal oppression of rapacious noblemen and the tyranny of the great feudal archbishops; the need of a strong central rule was everywhere felt amongst Churchmen. We do not know when the famous False Decretals were first produced, but they were first cited at the Council of Soissons in 853, and they were certainly drawn up in France, not in Rome. It is pretty certain that Nicholas I. knew nothing of them until the latter years of his reign, and it is doubtful that he ever used them. At any rate, none of his immediate successors did so; about two centuries later Leo IX. brought them into some prominence. The False Decretals made no new claims for the exercise of Papal authority; they simply reiterated and emphasized by spurious precedents the ancient claims of the fourth and fifth centuries. They are chiefly important as showing the widespread desire of northern clergy to strengthen and evoke the exercise of the Papal authority.

The coronation of Charlemagne by Leo III., the setting up of a second Roman Emperor, had seemed almost like high treason to the Eastern Bishops. The Roman Patriarch had finally cut himself off from the Roman world. This feeling of smouldering hostility to the Pope came to a head during the time of Nicholas. A long dispute concerning the rightful occupant of the See of Constantinople—Nicholas supporting the Patriarch Ignatius, and the Imperial Court their own nominee, Photius—ended in the summoning by Photius of a council. The Pope was declared excommunicate; the Latin Church was charged with having lapsed into heresy on eight articles of faith, and it was finally asserted that all the privileges of Rome had passed to Constantinople. For the next half-century there was schism between East and West.

In Europe, Nicholas I. vigorously and wisely asserted the Papal jurisdiction. He condemned the adulterous Lothair, King of Lorraine. The great Hincmar, Archbishop of Rheims, received back, at the direction of the Pope, a bishop whom he had deposed.

“Since the time of Blessed Gregory,” said a contemporary of St. Nicholas I., “no one who has been raised to the Papal dignity can be compared to him. He commanded kings and tyrants as if he were the lord of the world. To good bishops and priests, to pious laymen, he was kind, humble, gentle, and meek; to evildoers he was terrible and stern. People say rightly that God raised up in him a second Elias.”

How great had been his personal influence was to be terribly manifested by subsequent events. The period of a century and a half from 882 onwards is, perhaps, the darkest in Papal history. Most of these

Popes were capable statesmen, and not a few displayed genuine zeal for the welfare of the Church; but it was a terrible period, for all that. In 916, John X., leading the allied troops in person, captured the great Moslem fortress on the Garigliano, close to Rome, and the place, which had long been the terror of Italy, was destroyed. John XII. (955-964) was a vicious and unprincipled youth, accused by the Roman clergy of turning his palace into a brothel, of wearing armour, of simony, and of many other offences. The anarchy and ferocity of tenth-century Rome is strikingly illustrated by the fact that, of the seven Popes who reigned between 955 and 985, Benedict V. died in exile, Benedict VI. was assassinated, John XIV. died in prison, and Boniface VII. was probably poisoned.

A slightly better period followed, but after the death (in 1002) of Sylvester II., who first suggested the plan of recapturing the Holy Land from Islam, things became worse than ever. The Papacy became virtually the private property of the Roman counts of Tusculum. Benedict IX. was possibly the worst Pope who has ever occupied the Chair of Peter; in 1046 he resigned his office and put it up for sale. Yet even these frightful abuses were insufficient to extinguish or even to dim the prestige of the Papal See. Pilgrims still flocked to Rome from all over Europe; the Cluniac reformers had placed themselves under the special protection of the Papacy; King Canute of England visited Rome during the Tusculan régime, yet his letters show how deep a spiritual impression was made upon him by his pilgrimage to the Eternal City. In 997 the Faith was first preached to the Prussian barbarians of the Vistula district.

CHAPTER IV

FROM HILDEBRAND TO THE BORGIAS

THE history of the medieval Papacy is the history of medieval Europe—no less; the story is such a tremendous one that it seems almost presumptuous to attempt to summarize it in a page or two. Nevertheless, the attempt must be made.

The keynote of all medieval thought is the idea of unity. Charlemagne had aimed (perhaps unconsciously) at the establishment of secular or territorial unity, the formation of a great world-empire, in which all men would ultimately be included as citizens. But the fabric had not endured; and it was for Hildebrand, who became Pope as Gregory VII., to give reality to the dreams of Nicholas I. and of earnest Christian thinkers all over Europe by raising the Papal office to a position of active spiritual leadership. Hildebrand made real the vision of spiritual unity—a universal Church, the kingdom of God on earth, embracing all men in the one fold of the one Shepherd, who is represented on earth by His appointed vicar. In doing this, he consolidated and developed rather than created; he breathed life into the Christian frame of Europe.

Church and State in the Middle Ages were not two separate and distinct societies, but different aspects of the same society—the Christian Commonwealth. Yet that society was disposed under two governments, each supreme in its appointed sphere, each deriving

its authority from God—the spiritual and the temporal. We find it difficult to grasp this idea to-day—for with us in England, at any rate, the position is exactly reversed. Church and State are not one society but two societies; there is no dual authority, for the King in Parliament is the head of both. It is the precise antithesis of the medieval polity. The medieval Church may be said to have included the State; it was itself, as Dr. Tout puts it, a sort of super-State. This did not mean, of course, that the Church claimed to override princes in affairs of secular government. Neither Church nor Empire claimed omniscience; on the one hand, secular influence in episcopal elections was in some degree recognized by the Church; on the other, it was conceded by Imperialist publicists that lay investiture referred only to temporalities. Innocent III.'s famous disclaimer of feudal competence is representative. But the idea was implied and everywhere acted upon that political citizenship was dependent upon membership of the Church. The Bull of Excommunication was the most lethal of all political weapons; for exclusion from the Church meant the loss of all civic and legal privileges, and, if you were a prince or nobleman, it meant that your vassals were released from all oaths of allegiance to your person. The conception was that of a single society, living under a single principle of life, controlled ultimately by a single authority—a visible society, though of its nature spiritual, including within itself all others.

“The Church, enthroning itself over Christian society, makes a great and gallant attempt to unify all life, in all its reaches—political, social, economic,

intellectual—under the control of Christian principle. Politically it attempts to rebuke and correct kings for internal misgovernment, as when they falsify coinage, and for external misdoing, as when they break treaties; socially it controls the life of the family by the law of marriage which it administers, and the life of the individual by its system of penance; economically it seeks to regulate commerce and industry by enforcing just prices and prohibiting usury, as it seeks to control the economic motive in general by its conception of property as a trust held for the general benefit, and by its inculcation of charity; intellectually it develops a single culture in the universities which are its organs, and in the last resort it enforces that culture by the prosecution of heresy. It is a magnificent attempt at a synthesis of the whole of life by a sovereign wisdom.”*

The greatest social virtue and the principle of all social arrangement is justice; in all medieval treatises on authority the appeal is always to this idea of justice. “I have loved justice and hated iniquity,” murmured the great Hildebrand on his deathbed, “and therefore I die in exile.” Justice implied the orderly arrangement of all things in relation to the Divine plan; and, as Gregory VII. understood it, it implied the spiritual supremacy of the Pope over the whole Church—a thing virtually undisputed in Europe for centuries. Pride or arrogance (*superbia*) is the antithesis of justice (*justitia*). We have said that the spiritual supremacy of the Pope was undisputed. All

* Ernest Barker in *Social and Political Ideas of the Middle Ages* (Ed. F. J. C. Hearnshaw; Harrap), p. 15.

through the Middle Ages men denounced the abuses in the Papal Curia, protested violently against Papal taxes, exposed corruptions, ridiculed hypocrisies, and so on. Dante's great lament on the decline of the spiritual zeal of the Papacy is familiar; there is the story of that medieval wit, who said that it was no use going to Rome with an Accusative unless you took a Dative with you also; there are the great struggles between the Popes and such European monarchs as Philip-Augustus and Henry II. We can understand the remark of the great Englishman, Pope Hadrian IV. to his friend, John of Salisbury—that the Papal office was the most miserable position on earth; no men, perhaps, have been called upon to shoulder such tremendous responsibilities as were the Popes of the Middle Ages.

Right up to the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries Rome was probably the most turbulent city in Europe; few Popes could live there in security. We are, perhaps, too much inclined to look upon the twelfth and thirteenth century Popes—men like Alexander III. and Innocent IV.—as reigning serenely in the Eternal City, gathering tribute from the peoples of Europe for the furtherance of their own political designs and the maintenance of their own temporal independence. It is an interesting corrective to such a view to glance through any calendar of medieval Papal documents—such as Jaffé's second volume or Potthast's *Regesta**—and to note the relatively small

* Jaffé, *Regesta pontificum Romanorum . . . ad annum 1198*. (Leipzig, 1885.) Potthast, *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum ab. an 1198, ad. an. 1304*. (Berlin, 1874.)

proportion of bulls and rescripts that emanated from Rome. Very rarely indeed, prior to the death of Frederick II., was a Pope able to occupy his own palace for any length of time or to sing Mass regularly in St. Peter's; when he did manage to instal himself in Rome, he was almost always driven out within a few months. The flight to Avignon is seen in rather a new light when it is recognized that Innocent IV. was scarcely in Rome at all during his reign of eleven years, that Clement IV. dated no single document from Rome, and that neither Martin IV. nor Celestine V. ever entered the city.

From the time of Hildebrand to that of Innocent IV. the Papacy was occupied, on and off, with a life-and-death struggle against the Empire. The world had its own claims; and the Papacy had to resist constant attempts at its own absorption, enslavement, and secularization. Dr. Powicke quotes, in summary of the whole issue, the words of a Florentine chronicler, who wrote: "Humility is of no avail against sheer evil." The temporal struggles of the Papacy were the necessary concomitants of its vast spiritual mission in a society of which it was the cement. But if the Papacy involved itself in conflicts as violent as those of other secular princes, and if the Papal Curia often showed itself, in temporalities, as corrupt as anything that the time produced, it yet remains true that the spiritual supremacy was practically unchallenged (save by a few persons who were looked upon as cranks) until late in the fifteenth century. We need not indulge in any foolish talk about the "ages of faith"; there was faith, of course, and scepticism and indifference, as in all ages. But the

spiritual jurisdiction of the Pope was the core of ecclesiastical organization, and hence of the whole social system. As long as Wycliffe confined himself to denunciations of Papal taxes and abuses in Papal administration, he was vastly popular; but as soon as he mixed himself up in theology and argued against Transubstantiation and the primacy of the Pope, his influence declined and his teaching took on, in the eyes of his contemporaries, a character of eccentricity.

We now resume the historical narrative where it was left in the last chapter. In 1054 occurred the decisive schism between Eastern and Western Churches. Since the fifth century there had been intermittent periods of schism; from the eleventh to the fifteenth centuries there were to be intermittent periods of union. Outwardly the schism of 1054 was theological and doctrinal, the grounds of dispute being chiefly the employment by the Latin Church of unleavened bread in the Mass—which, according to the Eastern bishops, implied that Christ had no human soul—the use of the *filioque* clause in the Creed and the practice of the Saturday fast. For once the Eastern Emperor was on the side of conciliation and gave an honourable welcome to the legates sent by Leo IX. But Michael Cerularius, the Patriarch, was inexorable; and there can be no doubt that, in his defiance of the Pope, he had the support of almost the whole Eastern Church. Equally unquestionable is it that the breach was deliberately precipitated by Constantinople. It was the long-delayed result of the political severance of the eighth century; and had union been preserved until the time of the Crusades,

schism might never have become permanent. East and West might have remained united to this day.

As it was, the subsequent events did nothing to heal and everything to exaggerate the rupture. In 1204 the perfidy of the Venetians was responsible for one of the most abominable outrages in history—the sack of Constantinople. The expedition is still charitably referred to in history books as the Fourth Crusade. But the Easterners never forgot the hideous orgies of massacre and arson in which the Western soldiery indulged. They saw the whole thing as the work of the Papacy—though, in point of fact, Innocent III. had excommunicated the whole crusading army as soon as he heard of the terrible event. But the seeds of bitter hatred were sown; and two centuries later, when the Turk entered their city, the Easterners declared that they preferred the Sultan's turban to the Pope's tiara.

In 1071 the Normans captured Sicily, thereby reopening the Mediterranean and preparing the way for the great tidal wave of the First Crusade. In 1073 Hildebrand, who for nearly twenty years had been the power behind the Papal throne, was himself elected Pope and took the title of Gregory VII. The Papacy had shaken itself clear of the control of the Roman nobles, but only to fall into the hands of the Emperor; all the six Popes from Gregory VI. had been Germans, nominated by Henry III. One of the great reforms effected by Gregory VII. was to free the Papacy from all secular control as to the filling of the office, and, by vigorously putting into practice the decrees of the Lateran Council in 1059, to make the Papal office elective by the body of car-

dinals. The genius of Hildebrand was essentially conservative; he consolidated and established, but he did not create. The principles of his administration were the principles of the great Cluniac movement. He sought rigidly to enforce throughout the Church the old decrees against simony—that is, the sale and purchase of spiritual offices. Clerical celibacy, upon which Cluny had laid much stress, and which was already widely observed, became a part of Church discipline. But the great struggle of his life was in the matter of lay-investiture, and here he came into immediate conflict with the Emperor Henry IV. Many bishops and abbots were great temporal princes, whose political support was of vital importance to kings and emperors. As long as these high spiritual offices were at the bestowal of the secular ruler, reform in the Church, as Gregory clearly perceived, was impossible. In 1075 a council at Rome, over which he presided, forbade bishops to give feudal homage to any secular authority or to receive investiture from a prince. It was a declaration of war.

The famous incident at Canossa, when the Emperor waited for three days in the snow to kneel in penance before the Pope, has, perhaps, more dramatic colour than historical importance. For it was only an incident in the struggle. In 1080 the Emperor was again excommunicated; and four years later he advanced upon Rome, occupied the city, and installed an anti-Pope. After Gregory's death in 1085 the investiture controversy remained unsettled. Urban II. and Peter the Hermit were sounding the bugles for the First Crusade—that great French enterprise which hurled Europe against Asia in a wave of chivalric

idealism. In 1097 the crusaders took Nicæa, and three years later Baldwin was crowned first King of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem. As to the investiture controversy, a settlement with the King of England was reached, after protracted negotiations, at Bec, in 1107. In 1122, by the Concordat of Worms between Henry V. and Pope Calixtus III. it was agreed that all elections of bishops and abbots should take place in the presence of the Emperor, but that the clergy should have free rights of election. Bishops were bound to perform their feudal duties, and were to receive their temporalities by the touch of the Imperial sceptre. The earlier settlement at Bec between Henry I. of England and Pope Paschal II. had been on exactly similar lines.

In 1152 Frederick Barbarossa became Emperor. His long reign of thirty-eight years was passed in an attempt, ending in failure, to assert the political supremacy of the Empire over the whole of the Italian peninsula. "Wilt thou know," he said to the Roman people at the time of his coronation, "where the ancient glory of thy Rome, the dignified severity of the Senate, the tactics of war, and the invincible military prestige have gone? All are found amongst us Germans; all have been transmitted to us through the Empire." He was crowned in 1155 by the Englishman, Hadrian IV., and from that year until his death in 1159 the Pope was never able to enter Rome. His successor, the great Alexander III., after spending four years in exile in France, came back to Rome on St. Cecilia's day, 1165. Scarcely more than a year later Frederick's troops entered the city and sacked St. Peter's. The Pope escaped in the disguise of a

pilgrim, and the Emperor resorted to the usual device of appointing an anti-Pope. But the strong political influence of the Papacy outside the Empire was to make itself felt. In 1176 the Lombards, with whose interests the Pope had allied himself, utterly routed the Emperor at Legnano. The treaty of Venice in the following year was ratified by a solemn meeting in the Church of St. Mark when the Emperor, received on the steps of the church by the Pope, prostrated himself to the ground and offered spiritual homage to the pontiff. In March, 1179, the Third General Council of the Lateran assembled in Rome.

In 1186, an event, destined to be of great political importance, took place. Frederick married his son Henry to Constance, heiress to the kingdom of Sicily. Sicily had become, perhaps, the best governed and the most highly civilized country in Europe; everything seemed now to point to its becoming a fief of the Empire—an event against which Papal policy had been for centuries directed. As long as the States of the Church existed, separate jurisdictions in north and south Italy were essential to Papal security. "To have Lombardy and the South in the same strong hand," as a modern historian neatly puts it, "was to endanger the crushing of the States of the Church between the upper and nether millstone." Moreover, the States of the Church were the only guarantee to the Papacy of that freedom from secular domination, which was essential to the maintenance of its spiritual jurisdiction.

A superficial knowledge of history suggests that the reign of Innocent III. (1198-1216) marked the summit of Papal prestige throughout Europe. A

closer examination of the facts confirms this view. The redoubtable Frederick II., statesman and man of letters, keeper of elephants, dromedaries, and Moslem harems, the terror of heretics and bitter enemy of the Church, was still in his minority. Lothario Conti, Innocent III., was only thirty-seven at the time of his election; a scholar and graduate of the University of Paris, an accomplished lawyer and statesman, a great Christian gentleman in every sense of the words, he was to prove himself one of the greatest Popes in history. He founded hospitals and endowed schools all over Europe. In an age of revivalists and popular preachers—many of them hopelessly unbalanced—he made no mistake about St. Francis. He sent legates to Iceland, and, resuming the evangelization of the Prussians, appointed the first Bishop of Prussia in 1212. For nine years he hesitated before summoning the Crusade into Languedoc, seeking strenuously to bring union by spiritual weapons. He arbitrated in a dispute concerning the kingdom of Hungary, and excommunicated an apostate priest who aspired to the throne of Norway. His dealings with Philip-Augustus in the matter of the royal divorce are too well known to need repetition. In the last years of his reign he presided over the Fourth General Council of the Lateran, at which the Franciscan Order was officially recognized and the doctrine of Transubstantiation defined. Innocent died at Perugia in the following year. Like his predecessors, he enjoyed little personal security during his reign. It should always be remembered that these twelfth and thirteenth century Popes, who humbled Emperors to the dust, were not haughty prelates, ruling in untroubled splendour from Rome.

They were constantly on the move, were rarely able to settle in their own city, and were not infrequently in circumstances of grave personal danger. Luxury and temporal splendour were to come to the Papacy later, and were to bring disaster in their train.

The thirteenth century may justly be called the Friars' century. Innocent III. had confirmed the mission of St. Francis, and in 1220 Honorius III. formally recognized the Dominicans. The whole movement was essentially democratic and urban; it not only uncloistered the monk, but it brought him into the heart of the new mercantile cities. Most of the great Benedictine and Cistercian houses were active agricultural communities, whose members were, as a rule, recruited from the upper classes. Men of all ranks were from the first to be found in the new mendicant orders. The Friars, so to say, brought monasticism up to date, supplying in the organization of the Church a need which neither the older monastic foundations nor the parochial system could satisfactorily answer. They did much to improve the education and training of the clergy. They wrote popular manuals of devotion, and, in the Universities, raised the mighty fabric of scholastic philosophy. As confessors they attained so great a popularity that Boniface VIII. was forced to regulate their activities in this direction, as tending to supersede the functions of the parish clergy. Finally, in the mission field they carried Christianity to the uttermost ends of the known world. Franciscan and Dominican scholars debated with Moslem doctors in the schools of Baghdad. In 1245 Innocent IV. sent a Franciscan mission to the Great Khan of Tartary. An archbishop

of Pekin was consecrated by the instructions of Clement V., but the rise of the Ming Dynasty in 1362 put a summary end to the Christian mission in China, several Friars losing their lives.

The death of Frederick II. in 1250, the Council of Lyons in 1274, the rise and fall of the French power in Sicily, and the final transference of Sicily to the King of Aragon are all foreshadowings of the "Avignon Captivity" of the Papacy. Boniface VIII., as Dean Milman put it, "surveyed Christendom with the haughty glance of a master, but not altogether with the cool and penetrating wisdom of a statesman." The famous bull, *Clericis laicos*, which prescribed that no taxes should be laid upon the clergy without Papal sanction, raised a storm of opposition in the French and English kingdoms; and the Pope was forced to compromise in the later *Etsi de statu*. In the most extravagant terms Boniface asserted the complete supremacy of the spiritual over the secular authority; but the crushing humiliation which he was later to suffer at the hands of Philip the Fair showed that such assertions, whether justifiable or not, were at any rate anachronistic. New national forces were in the field; the old internationalism was already passing.

The Avignon Popes have fared badly in historical textbooks, and perhaps naturally so. The current allegation is that, during this period of seventy-three years, the Papacy was simply the obedient tool of the French Kings. This is broadly true, though it needs qualification. If Clement VI. made loans totalling some 600,000 florins to the French Crown, if the condemnation of the Templars was largely brought about by the machinations of Philip the Fair, it yet

remains true that six of the seven Avignon Popes were subjects of the English Crown prior to their elections. Clement VI. was chiefly instrumental in bringing about an armistice between Edward III. of England and the French sovereign, and John XXII. had striven to bring peace after the Scottish conflicts. Moreover, as regards the mere fact of residence in French territory, we have to remember that, since the middle of the thirteenth century, the Popes had lived almost anywhere but in Rome—though remaining, of course, within the Papal States. In Martin IV.'s time (1281-1285) the Curia was, apparently, definitely established at Viterbo.

On the side of ecclesiastical administration the Avignon Popes had a number of very solid achievements to their credit. Clement V., a weak and vacillating person, almost a chronic invalid, completed the codification of the Canon Law, and founded Universities at Orleans and Perugia. John XXII., seventy-two years old at the time of his election (1316), established the hierarchy in Persia and vigorously reformed the Order of the Knights Hospitallers. Benedict XII., an energetic hunter of heretics in his early days, made efforts to reform the Curia, and spoke of the "immeasurable abuses" in the high places of church administration. These abuses were indeed enormous. The transference of the seat of Papal government to Avignon had deprived the Popes of large sources of revenue, and necessitated the development of a vast fiscal system. The Papacy was to become the greatest financial institution in Europe. Local churches were everywhere impoverished by the constantly increasing demands of the central Court of Christendom; the

system of Papal provisions was enormously extended, and John XXII. almost abolished election by cathedral chapters; the payment of annates was introduced by Innocent VI. Much of the revenue so collected was spent upon the worthiest objects—the endowment of learning, the arts, and so forth. But the lavish magnificence of the Papal Curia was a scandal to all Europe; and the reckless prodigality of Clement VI. —“None of my predecessors have known how to conduct themselves as Popes,” he once said—laid upon his successors a huge burden of debt, whose attempted liquidation necessitated further exactions. The Black Death plunged Europe into poverty and destitution; yet still the Curia was insatiable in its demands for funds. At last, in 1378, Gregory XI. returned to Rome.

Followed the crowning scandal of the Great Schism, when for forty years (1378-1417) two, and afterwards three, claimants strenuously asserted their titles as canonically elected Popes. Anathemas and counter-anathemas were hurled back and forth, and it was not until the Council of Constance that unity was restored. But the Conciliar Movement failed with surprising completeness in its two aims of initiating an effective reforming movement in the Church and of setting the authority of General Councils above that of the Pope; whilst astute Papal diplomacy led to the signing of a number of important agreements with European sovereigns. At the Council of Florence in 1439, union with the Eastern Church was re-established. The Easterners urgently appealed to the Pope for a crusade against the Turk, who was already menacing Constantinople; but although Nicholas V.

strove to unite Western Christendom for the enterprise, nothing was done. Constantinople fell in 1453, and the schism between East and West, which has lasted to this day, came in 1472. In 1467 Sweynheym and Pannartz came to Rome with their printing-press. In 1478 Sixtus IV. gave his sanction to the reorganization by Ferdinand and Isabella of the Spanish Inquisition.

By the beginning of the fifteenth century the medieval polity of Europe was manifestly dissolving. The fiscal policy of the Papacy and the notorious abuses in the Curia, the political subservience of the Popes to the French throne during the Avignon period, and the hopeless confusion of the schism had done much to undermine popular respect for the Papal leadership. Yet in spite of these things, which had a sort of logical culmination in the Conciliar Movement, the star of the Papacy, by the middle of the century, seemed everywhere in the ascendant. To all outward appearances the Papal office was as strong as ever. The Popes had returned to Rome as great temporal princes, and had set themselves vigorously to work to restore and beautify the city. With Nicholas V. we get the first of the great humanist Popes; the Papacy comes forward as the champion and patron of the new classical learning, and the Papal Court becomes the most brilliant in Europe, the Mecca of scholars and artists, the focus of the new revolt against tradition. Fra Angelico beautifully adorned the Roman Church; that accomplished scholar, Lorenzo Valla, who exposed the Donation of Constantine as a forgery, was Papal secretary and canon of the Lateran Basilica.

The Renaissance Papacy has something of the pagan magnificence of the Imperial Court in the days of the Augustan Emperors. Corruption of all kinds, simony and nepotism, were overtly practised. Temporal splendour had come to the Papacy and spiritual energy had correspondingly declined. Certainly the morality of the Curia was no better and no worse than that of other Italian Courts—which is not saying much. The summit of secular magnificence and the depth of spiritual and moral laxity were reached during the reign of the famous Rodrigo Borgia, Alexander VI., who secured his own election in 1492 by the most flagrant bribery and simony. Nobody nowadays thinks of disputing his title to be considered a capable and even brilliant statesman, a generous patron of learning and charitable works, and a zealous champion of Christendom against the Turk. Nor does anyone pay overmuch attention to those scurrilous pamphleteers of the time, who charged him with every kind of abominable crime. But, as a Christian priest, the spiritual and moral spokesman of Christendom, he was utterly impossible. The shameless favouritism, by which he constantly advanced his relations to the highest ecclesiastical offices, suggests the reflection that all his geese were swans; more than one modern apologist has gone so far as to maintain that all his sons were nephews. We may, perhaps, be content with the judgment of a contemporary chronicler :

“He was a pontiff whose splendid qualities were matched by equally great vices. There was nothing small about him. He was intelligent, eloquent, tactful in adapting himself to the character of everyone

he met, most energetic in matters of business, and, though he had never given much time to literary pursuits, it was clear that he set no small store upon learning. He was always so punctual in paying his soldiers that, whatever happened, he was able to count on a willing and most loyal army. All these virtues, however, were neutralized by vices which need not here be mentioned, and by his overmastering desire to secure great positions for his bastard children."

CHAPTER V

FROM TRENT TO THE VATICAN

THE year 1500 finds the Papacy enthroned upon the Vatican Hill, decked out in all the trappings of an exaggerated temporal splendour; it has become more nearly secularized than at any other period of its history. "What is followed is the gospel, not according to St. Mark, but according to the marks of silver." During this half-century of its history the Papacy does indeed seem more like the ghost of the old Empire than the spiritual directorate of Christendom. The much-needed reforms of Church administration, the stamping-out of the universal traffic in sacred things, seem as far off as ever; the vested interests on the side of the intolerable *status quo* are too powerful. The Papacy has become a wealthy and liberal Italian principedom, and men are everywhere beginning to despair of its claim to spiritual leadership—a claim which, when the Papal throne was occupied by a man like Alexander VI., seemed almost grotesque. The next four centuries are to witness an almost complete reversal of the whole position. Since the fall of Rome in 1870 the Papacy has ceased to exist as a temporal power, whilst its spiritual imperium has become greater than at any other time in the past.

The sixteenth century was an age of confusion and conflict, and, in spite of such features as the colonization of the Americas and the spread of printing, it is

more accurately regarded as an age of disruption than as one of reconstruction. The terrible religious conflicts in France, the Marian and Elizabethan persecutions in England, and the ferocious activities of the Inquisition in Spain, suggest rather the death-agonies of the old age than the birth-pains of the new. The famous principle, *Cujus regio ejus religio* ("One country, one religion"), which found explicit expression at the Peace of Augsburg in 1555, is essentially an attempt at compromise between the old political ideas of the Middle Ages and the new forces of nationalist feeling. Even a man like Philip II. of Spain could declare that he would rather not reign at all than reign over heretics; and Mr. Tawney, in his masterly *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, has shown us how almost pedantically medieval was the social philosophy of men like Luther, Melanchthon, and Latimer. The sixteenth century is a sort of nightmare of medievalism—of medievalism run riot and robbed of its unifying principle. The Divine Right of Kings was the first substitute for the Divine Right of the Pope.

"Authority, expelled from the altar, finds a new and securer home upon the throne. . . . Sceptical as to the existence of unicorns and salamanders, the age of Machiavelli and Henry VIII. found food for its credulity in the worship of that rare monster, the God-fearing Prince."

So writes Mr. Tawney; and Lord Acton gave us much the same idea when he said: "Calvin preached and Bellarmine lectured; but Machiavelli reigned."

What we usually understand by the Renaissance Papacy may be said to end with the death of Leo X.

in 1521. Julius II., a consummate statesman, a munificent patron of the arts, a vigorous prince who led his troops in battle on more than one occasion, had freed the Papal States from dependence upon the French power in Italy, and in 1506 had laid the foundation stone of the new St. Peter's. It was he, too, who, in order to raise funds for the new fabric, commenced that highly questionable campaign in the granting of Indulgences, which was to fire the train of revolt in Germany. Leo X., a mild and generous person and an astute politician, pursued the same unfortunate course, and thereby precipitated the inevitable catastrophe. On June 15, 1520, after a long and careful examination of his whole case, Luther was excommunicated and forty-one Lutheran theses were condemned. Such things had often happened before; there was so far nothing in the event to make it unique or even sensational. Henry VIII. in England came forward stoutly as the champion of orthodoxy against Luther's impious attack on the Sacraments. But the genuine reforming ideals of Hadrian VI., the son of a ship's carpenter of Utrecht, were cut short by his early death; and this simple, spiritually minded Pope was no match for the intriguing cardinals of the Papal Court. The reign of the weak and irresolute Clement VII., a cousin of Leo X., was to witness the final disaster. The fiery zeal of Luther had set the Germanies ablaze. In 1527 a half-starved and maddened imperial army, composed largely of Lutherans, sacked Rome with a savage thoroughness unexceeded by the troops of Genseric or Robert Guiscard. By the Act of Royal Supremacy in November, 1534, England severed her spiritual

allegiance to the Papal office. Nemesis had come with a vengeance. The tottering equilibrium of the medieval polity was destroyed; and still the Augean stables of the Curia remained uncleansed.

Into the involved political history of the sixteenth-century Papacy we cannot here enter. The subject defies compression, and must be followed in the leisurely though fascinating pages of a Pastor or a Creighton. With the Treaty of Cambrai in 1529, Spain becomes the dominating power in Europe, and the reign of Philip II. shows her at the summit of her wealth and prosperity. It was Richelieu's nationalist policy which really cemented the schisms and divisions of the previous century; it was he who, by supporting Catholicism at home and Protestantism abroad, finally crippled the Spanish power and gave to France the pre-eminence of the *grand siècle*. The Treaty of Westphalia may be said to mark the real end of the Middle Ages.

For the Papacy the year 1534 was a turning-point, the nadir of its humiliation. The complete disruption of the Church seemed inevitable, yet the situation was to be tardily saved and mighty reforming forces were to regenerate the scarred fabric of Catholic Christendom. The twenty-five years covered by the pontificates of Paul III. and Paul IV.—the latter was in his eightieth year at the time of his election—mark the real turn of the tide. The long-delayed General Council met at Trent in 1545, and was primarily important from the disciplinary rather than from the doctrinal point of view. But it was from Spain that the real driving-force of reform emanated. Some years before Luther's revolt in Germany the Spanish Church

had woken to new spiritual energy under the wise directing influence of Cardinal Ximenes; the great Complutensian Bible in four languages—a triumph both of scholarship and of typographical technique—had come from the press in 1514, produced under his direction and at his expense. In 1540 a Spanish gentleman, Ignatius of Loyola, received from Pope Paul III. the confirmation of his new Order, the Society of Jesus—that weapon of steel which, during the sixteenth century, was to come near to restoring the whole of Europe to the old faith; which was, as has been well said, to reform the Church by compelling the Papacy to realize its own ideals. The Jesuits were to the sixteenth century what the Friars had been to the thirteenth. They took Christianity to Japan and the Indies, they countered the somewhat corybantic preachings of reformers by evolving the most elaborate educational system that Europe had yet known; and if some, like Parsons, were swept by excess of zeal into discreditable political intrigue, the great majority—men like Campion and Peter Canisius—laboured only for the faith which they professed, and cared nothing for the things of this world.

The Jesuits played a surprisingly prominent part at the Council of Trent, whose final session was concluded in 1564. With the accession to the Papal throne of Pius V., a Dominican Friar, the Catholic restoration entered upon its most vigorous phase. St. Pius V. (1566-1572), Gregory XIII. (1572-1585), and Sixtus V. (1585-1590) are pre-eminently the Popes of the counter-reformation; and the latter was one of the most remarkable Pontiffs in history. By negotiating an alliance between Spain and the Venetians, Pius made

possible the long-desired crusade against the Turk, and on October 7, 1571, the European navies routed the Turkish fleet at Lepanto. The revised calendar, introduced by Gregory XIII. in 1582, corrected the accumulated error of the Julian calendar by dropping ten days from the month of October, 1582, and provided against future error by regulating the bissextile years. Countries of Catholic allegiance adopted the new Gregorian system at once, but in Protestant kingdoms the reform was, coming from such a source, far from welcome. St. Bartholomew and the *Regnans in Excelsis*, by which Pius had excommunicated Elizabeth, were fresh in everybody's minds. The Pope, it seemed, having failed to frighten people by his threats of eternal damnation, was now trying to accelerate their passage to the lower regions by cutting ten days out of their temporal lives. Consequently it was not until 1700 that Leibnitz finally persuaded the Protestant States of Germany to adopt the new reckoning; whilst England did not come into line until 1752.

Sixtus V., we have said, was one of the most remarkable Pontiffs in history. Himself a practical man with a real genius for administration, he had little confidence in or respect for his official ally, Philip II. The defeat of the Armada caused him no surprise, and he is reported once to have declared that Henry of Navarre and Elizabeth of England were the only European sovereigns for whom he had any real admiration. He radically reorganized the Roman Congregations and fixed the administrative system of the Curia on the lines that it has kept to this day. He greatly enlarged the Vatican library and formed a gigantic scheme for the conquest of the Turk and the

recapture of Egypt and Palestine. By his vigorous measures against brigandage he made the Papal States the safest of any in Europe. He put in hand the construction of a new aqueduct for the supply of water to Rome, and undertook a great scheme of drainage in the Pontine marshes. Two things, he observed on one occasion, are necessary to good government—severity and a great deal of money. The epigram gives us the political history of the sixteenth century in a nutshell.

It has been well said that, if we would understand Roman Catholicism as an organization between 1520 and 1700, we must study the Council of Trent; if we would understand it as a religion, we must study the *Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius. The former gives us the principles upon which the Catholic restoration was so successfully conducted; the latter gives us the spirit which animated the whole movement. But by the end of the sixteenth century the first great fires of zeal were already beginning to flicker. Spain had held both Naples and Milan since 1559; the fall of La Rochelle in 1628 was a crushing disaster for the French Huguenots; and with the rise to power of Richelieu, France “arose to help the heretics harry the House of Hapsburg.” Richelieu’s anti-imperial policy throughout the Thirty Years’ War was to support Catholicism at home and Protestantism abroad; and Urban VIII., who seems to have recognized that the main issue was political rather than religious, was content to support the French Cardinal, and is even believed to have rejoiced at the victories of the Swedish hero, Gustavus Adolphus. Indirectly the Thirty Years’ War contributed to increasing the temporal power of the

Papacy; directly it led to the steady decline of the Spanish power and to the French ascendancy of the two great Bourbon Kings. But it was French policy, and Papal support of it, which may be said to have frustrated the full completeness of the Catholic restoration. For good or ill, the old European polity of the Middle Ages had finally crumbled. In effect the Treaty of Westphalia dissolved the Empire and severely limited the political power of the Papacy; the last interdict, launched against Venice in 1605, was a complete failure; the Bull of Deposition was a thing of the past.

From the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 to the outbreak of the Revolution in 1789 the history of the Papacy is one of steady decline, both temporal and spiritual. It was the age of the Great Powers, each pursuing a nationalist policy towards the Church; and it was the age of the new nationalism. Gibbon, confronted by Notre-Dame Cathedral, "darted a contemptuous glance at the stately monuments of superstition." Men like Bossuet and Fénelon were exceptional in their zeal and piety; more representative, perhaps, of the eighteenth-century French hierarchy was Cardinal de Polignac, Archbishop of Auch, who never set foot in his diocese for fifteen years. "A mere priest," observed the witty Champfort, "must believe a little, or he will be looked upon as a hypocrite; but must not be too sincere, or people will call him intolerant. A Vicar-General may permit himself a smile whenever religion is attacked; a Bishop may laugh; and a Cardinal may give his cordial assent." A sort of cultured indifferentism became the order of the day, and Louis XVI., after listening to a sermon

by a well-known preacher, observed that "if the Abbé had only said a little about Christianity, there is no subject that he would have left untouched." As regards the corresponding state of affairs in Italy, we shall search many history books for a better summary than Stendhal's. He is describing the joy and excitement caused by the arrival of Napoleon's troops in Milan: "So excessive and so general was the frolic that I cannot possibly convey an idea of it, unless it be by the following profoundly historical reflection: the nation had been bored for a century!"

In the administrative system of the Roman Curia there was, however, no falling back to the old corruptions of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Innocent XII. put a final stop to nepotism, and wise Pontiffs like Innocent XI. and Benedict XIV. are in the tradition of the great reforming Popes. But a much more serious matter was the temporal misgovernment of the Papal States. The Papacy was still burdened with debt, and Clement XII. (1734-1740) issued paper money and started a Government lottery; Clement XIII. made a forced loan, and by 1785 the taxes had been "farmed" for years in advance. When the French Revolution broke out, the Papal States were on the verge of bankruptcy.

Finally, in this period prior to the Revolution we have to note the various nationalist movements, which may be said to have culminated in the suppression of the Jesuits by Clement XIV. in 1773. In many respects—that it was inspired and precipitated by a French king, that it was confirmed by a Pope—this famous event invites comparison with the suppression, nearly five centuries earlier, of the Knights Templars.

Jealousy of the enormous wealth of the Society and of their worldwide influence, particularly in South America, were determining factors in the suppression. A few years later came the wholesale spoliations and seizures of Church property which accompanied the Revolution. In 1796, Napoleon triumphed in Italy, and in the following year, by the Peace of Tolentino, Pius VI. was forced to surrender Avignon, Bologna, Ferrara, and the Romagna. In consideration for his personal safety, the Pope was conducted to Valence in 1798; eighteen months later he died in exile. "It is not strange," says Macaulay, "that in the year 1799 even sagacious observers should have thought that, at length, the hour of the Church of Rome had come."

And yet the year 1800 may fitly be regarded as inaugurating that new era of Catholic restoration which is still proceeding in our own time. Napoleon, who in 1797 had declared his intention of abolishing the Papacy, swiftly came to realize that society cannot exist without morals, nor morals without religion. "I regard religion," he declared in 1806, "not as the mystery of the Incarnation, but as the secret of the social order." His endeavour was to recreate the Papacy as a sort of French chaplaincy; the Pope would receive a salary from the Government, like any other State official, and the constitution of the Church would be defined by the Four Articles of 1682, the old bulwarks of Gallicanism. But when disaster came to the Emperor, Pius VII. was able to return to Rome after an absence of five years. He made his final entry into the city, amid tremendous enthusiasm, on the day before Waterloo. So ended a brief but profoundly significant chapter in Papal history. Pius VII. offered

a refuge in Rome to members of Napoleon's family, and concerned himself to secure the kindly treatment of the captive Emperor. The Jesuits were reconstituted in 1814, and at the Congress of Vienna the Papal States were restored to the Church. Pius died in 1823, after one of the most romantic careers in all history.

The reign of Pius IX. (1846-1878), the longest of any in Papal history, may be said to end one chapter and to begin another. On the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War the French troops were withdrawn from Rome, and in September, 1870, the army of Victor Emmanuel entered the city. Within a few weeks a general plebiscite was instituted to decide upon the desirability of annexing the Papal States to the Italian kingdom. The nineteenth century had witnessed little amelioration in the government of the Papal States; taxation had been exorbitant, and the administration was, perhaps, rather incompetent than corrupt. At any rate, the voting showed an overwhelming majority in favour of annexation, and thus, after an existence of over eleven hundred years, the temporal power of the Papacy came to an end. Pius refused with firm dignity to make terms with the Italian Sovereign; since that day no Pope has left the Vatican buildings.

In 1848, Pius had been compelled to flee from Rome, but on his return in 1850 the city was thronged with pilgrims as never before. Spiritual restoration was advancing with steadily increasing momentum. In 1850 the hierarchy was re-established in England, in 1853 in Holland, and in 1878 in Scotland. In 1864 the famous "Syllabus of Errors" condemned eighty propositions bearing on pantheism, socialism, com-

munism, and other contemporary theories. Finally, in 1870, the doctrine of Papal infallibility received explicit definition at the Vatican Council. With this, the largest assembly of bishops ever held in Church history, we will bring these historical notes to a conclusion.

CHAPTER VI

THE PAPACY TO-DAY

THE Italian army entered Rome on September 15, 1870, and Rome, for centuries the political capital of the Papal States, thus became the capital city of the new Italian kingdom. We are probably too near in time to this event to realize its full significance; for history is like a cinematograph entertainment—the best seats are at the back. It may seem paradoxical to say that we can understand the past better than we can understand the present; but it is certain that the passage of time can alone set events in their true perspective and make possible a balanced appreciation of larger issues. The fall of Rome in 1870 inaugurated a new era in the history of the Papacy; that much is clear. For with the absorption of the States of the Church into a united Italian kingdom the territorial independence of the Papacy came to an end; the *imperium* of the Pope has become a purely spiritual one, but whereas, in the past, the continuance of that *imperium* was guaranteed by his temporal sovereignty over the States of the Church, it is now guaranteed—in theory, at any rate—only by such concessions as the Italian Government may see fit to grant.

The first attempt to grapple with this new problem was the famous Law of Guarantees which was promulgated from the Quirinal on May 15, 1871. Within forty-eight hours Pius IX. formally declared his inability to accept these guarantees or to recognize

in the new law a satisfactory solution of the question. Feelings ran high at the time, and the Pope's attitude was loudly denounced as capricious and obscurantist. Yet his wisdom in repudiating the Law of Guarantees has been amply manifested by subsequent events: those who constantly tell us that the Papacy is largely identified with Italian interests and Italian policy tend, perhaps, to forget that the very existence to-day of the Roman question is ample demonstration to the contrary. The non-acceptance of the Law of Guarantees is a constant witness to the supra-national character of the Papal office. Not that the Law of Guarantees was in any real sense dictated by anti-clerical or jingoist sentiment or, indeed, by feelings other than of profound respect for the Papacy; it was a genuine and high-minded attempt to find a basis of agreement to a problem which is all the more complicated because both parties to the dispute are so unquestionably justified in their claims. In a united Italian kingdom it is naturally intolerable that the capital city should itself exist as a sort of extra-national oasis; to the churchman it is naturally intolerable that the Pope, the spiritual sovereign of 300,000,000 souls, should own the very roof over his head only as a concession from a secular Government, upon whose territory he is allowed to live. The protest of Pius IX. against the Law of Guarantees has been renewed again and again by his successors. In the encyclical *ubi arcano*, dated December 23, 1922, Pius XI. put the Papal position with such conciseness and clearness that we may, perhaps, be forgiven a quotation:

“The divine nature and origin of our power, as well as the sacred right of the community of the

faithful spread throughout the world, demand that this sacred power should be independent of all human authority, and should not be subjected to human ordinances. . . . We, then, heir and depositary of the thought as of the duties of our predecessors, provided (as they were) with the sole competent authority in this most grave matter, do hereby renew the protests which our predecessors raised for the defence of the rights and the dignity of the Apostolic See. We do this, not to satisfy a vain ambition for terrestrial power . . . but in pursuance of our sacrosanct charge and in the knowledge that we must render to the divine Judge a strict account of our actions."

In a word, the nature of the Papal office is such that no Pope can regard himself as the subject of any secular government; to do so would be to imperil that spiritual mission which is its purpose and its essence. On the other hand, that same secular government, whilst willing to accord full sovereign honours to the Papacy, cannot recognize its complete independence nor regard the Eternal City as other than the capital city of Italy. No solution has yet been found. Many suggestions have been made since 1870 for the actual transference to some other place of the seat of Papal authority. A return to Avignon has been proposed; Sardinia, Corsica, Corfu, and the Balearics have been suggested. About the end of the nineteenth century an American proposal was put forward for the establishment of the Papal Curia in Louisiana; other enthusiasts have talked of buying the Azores or the Canaries for the Papacy. But nothing has come or can come of these schemes. By its very definition the Church is Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman. The

permanent departure of the Papacy from Rome is a thing unthinkable. And so the Popes, from Pius IX. to Pius XI. in our own time, have maintained their silent protest against the Law of Guarantees, and have taken upon themselves the burden of a voluntary imprisonment upon the Vatican Hill.

It has been said that the Roman question will settle itself with the passage of time, and the same critic once observed that Italy's greatest statesman will be he who can solve the Roman question. On these matters the present writer is wholly unqualified to comment. But it is worth noting that of recent years the sharp edge of the whole matter seems to have been considerably worn down. When Zola went to Rome, he was apparently prepared to find that the Roman question was the constant preoccupation of statesmen, and that a demeanour of silent hostility was everywhere preserved between the respective protagonists in the great matter. He expected to find Rome sharply divided into two rival camps—the Vatican and the Quirinal; and he drew up a sort of *questionnaire*, which he intended to put to an Italian friend. One of his first concerns was to ask what the Roman aristocracy thought of the Roman question.

“My dear sir,” replied the other, “I assure you that the Roman aristocracy don't care a brass farthing about it!”

The present position is, of course, a deadlock. But everybody realizes that it is a deadlock, and, thanks to the tact and sympathy both of the Curia and the Government, there is no sort of permanent friction. As far as official and formal pronouncements are concerned, and as far as affects the real points at issue,

there has been no change since 1870, but a workable *modus vivendi* has been arrived at, and it would seem that fuller understanding may well lead, in course of time, to lasting adjustment of this most difficult problem.

We have no space here to speak of the achievements or personal characteristics of the four Popes since the death of Pius IX. in 1878—of Leo XIII., one of the greatest ecclesiastical statesmen in all history; of Pius X., that great saint who died broken-hearted on the day that the German army entered Brussels; of Benedict XV., who presided over the Church during the terrible war years; of Pius XI., now reigning, a renowned Alpine climber in earlier days, a scholar of European reputation, ex-librarian of the Ambrosian Library at Milan and afterwards of the Vatican Library. We may not yet presume to pass the verdict of history upon their reigns, though we may read of their lives in many biographies. Many are the anecdotes that are related of Pius X. He was one who liked the company of his fellow-men, and when he announced that in future the Pope would not, as hitherto, take his meals alone, there was considerable consternation amongst the Cardinals. To their remonstrances against this innovation, Pius, quite unperturbed, responded: "And did St. Peter always feed alone?" They replied with a dubious negative. "And the Renaissance Popes?" asked Pius. "Surely their meals were not solitary!" It was finally elicited that the tradition by which the Pope took his meals in solitude went back to Urban VIII. "Very well," remarked Pius X., "our glorious predecessor, Urban VIII., decided to eat alone, as he had a right to do.

In virtue of the same right, we decide the contrary!" That was at the beginning of his reign. At the end of it came the cataclysm of the Great War. After the murder at Serajevo, the Emperor Francis Joseph asked for the Papal blessing upon the "punitive expedition" against Serbia. The refusal was prompt and to the point. "I bless peace," answered Pius, "not war." Within a month he was dead—as some said, of a broken heart.

Materials are not yet available which would enable one to speak with any finality about the Papal policy during the war years. In Allied countries it was denounced as pro-German, in Germany and Austria as pro-Ally. Benedict XV. was referred to by Ludendorff as a French Pope, and by Clemenceau as a German Pope. Chiefly, the Papacy concerned itself with works of charity, arranging for the exchange of prisoners unfit for further military service, and for the provision of hospitals and the like. Benedict's peace proposals, put forward in August, 1917, were quite fruitless, and his question, "Must the civilized world be reduced to a graveyard?" fell upon deaf ears; we were getting ready for Passchendaele. In the same year was completed the codification of the Canon Law, undertaken by the direction of Pius X. in 1904—"the most astounding legal *tour de force* ever accomplished."

Here our story comes to its natural close.

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